

Donald "Don" McLellan Leitch



Service Number: R-78887

Rank: Sergeant

Summary: Donald McLellan Leitch was born on April 4, 1922 in Strathroy, Ontario to Raymond Campbell Leitch, and Maude McLellan Leitch. He had brown hair and blue eyes and was called "Don" by his family and friends. He was the middle brother in a family of three boys. His older brother was Jack Raymond and his younger brother was Robert. Donald and his brothers helped their parents with the work on their mixed farm in Caradoc Township. The Leitch family later moved to town. Donald attended grade school in Caradoc Township and Strathroy Collegiate Institute.

During high school, he worked part time in the evenings as an usher at the King Theatre in Strathroy, located on Front St. where Cuddy Furniture and Appliances Ltd. is now. He later worked briefly at Steplers Drug Store, located on Front St. where Bossoms Guardian Pharmacy is today. Donald was known as a good dancer and he always enjoyed going to dances held at the Strathroy Town Hall. He was a member of the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Strathroy.

His Father Ray joined the Royal Canadian Engineers and served as a Staff Sergeant both at home and overseas during the war. Donald and his brother Jack enlisted together in the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1940 and they were sent to Manning Pool in Toronto to train. Their youngest brother Robert served in the Army. Donald's service number was R78887 and he was a Sergeant pilot. He received his wings in October of 1941 in Brandon, Manitoba and went overseas in November. While overseas, he wrote home regularly. He became engaged to a girl he met in England.

Donald was killed in action on August 28, 1942 when his Wellington aircraft was lost in transit from Gibraltar. Pilot officer G.S. Bishop of the Royal Air Force was also killed. Donald was 20 years old when he died. He was the first casualty from Strathroy. Although he has no known grave, his name is inscribed on the Malta War Memorial in Malta.